



ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

CATHOLIC CHURCH • BARTOW, FL

DIOCESE OF ORLANDO

ST. THOMAS ANNOUNCEMENTS

December 14, 2025

1. **PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR PEACE IN THE UKRAINE AND ISRAEL.**
2. **Las Posadas** – Nightly December 15 – 23 at 6:00 pm. Las Posadas is a 9-day novena that reenacts Mary and Joseph’s search for a place to stay in Bethlehem.
3. **The obligation to participate in the Eucharist in person on Sundays and other holy days of obligation was restored on Palm Sunday 2022.** Regular attendance at Mass is what fulfills God’s commandment to “Keep holy the Sabbath Day”. Our world is hurting. We all need healing yet many of us are separated from the source of our strength. Jesus Christ invites us to return to the source and summit of our faith: his Real Presence in the Eucharist.
4. Our Parish bulletin can be viewed weekly online by clicking on the Bulletin button on our website at www.stthomasbartow.org. There is also a button to view the previous week’s bulletin if you missed it. If you do not have access to the internet, please let the office know, and copies can be printed. If you look at the bulletin on your phone, you can add an icon to your homepage by doing the following steps for an iphone.
1. **Do a search for stthomasbartow.org.** 2. **When the page opens, Click** (touch) the small square with an arrow pointing up on the bottom of the screen. 3. **Scroll** down and (touch “Add to Home Screen”. 4. **Click** (touch) “Add” in the upper right-hand corner. The next time you want to view the website, you only have to touch the new icon on your home page screen. If you need help finding the website or creating the icon on your phone, call the office or stop in the narthex after Mass for help. If you have an Android phone, please call the office for directions.

5. To subscribe to Bishop John Noonan's E-Scroll, news from the Diocese of Orlando go to www.orlandodiocese.org/e-scroll/. Just provide your name and email address.
6. Fr. Blake Britton, a priest in our Diocese, who is now at the Pontifical Institute of St. John Paul II in Washington DC for further studies, has written a book, *Reclaiming Vatican II, What It (Really) Said, What It Means, and How It Calls Us to Renew the Church*. If you would like to purchase the book, click on the following link: <https://books.wordonfire.org/reclaimingvaticanii>
7. Bishop Robert Barron, author, speaker, theologian and founder of Word on Fire, a global media ministry, is producing a seven volume Bible series. Volume I focuses on the Gospels, Volume II on Acts, Letters, and Revelation, Volume III, on The Pentateuch, Volume IV on The Promised Land and Volume V on Exile and Return. All are all available now at <https://wordonfire.org/bible>. Volume VI The Wisdom Literature and will be released at a later date. If you would like to subscribe to Bishop Barron's newsletter, go to <https://wordonfire.org/#newsletter> and just provide your email address.
8. In honor of Mother Angelica, foundress of EWTN catholic television network, please consider a gift of \$10, \$20, or \$25 per month or any amount you choose.

Catholic Trivia

Did you know Juan Diego walked over 10 miles to Mass every day?

Most people know Juan Diego as the humble visionary of Our Lady of Guadalupe. He was the quiet indigenous convert chosen to carry Heaven's message. But here's a fun fact that reveals just how extraordinary he really was: Juan Diego used to walk about 15 miles to attend daily Mass. Not once a week. Not when it was convenient. Every. Single. Day.

Before dawn, he wrapped himself in his tilma and walked the long, dusty road to Mass, moved by love for the Eucharist and a desire to know Christ more deeply. And it was on one of these early morning walks, on December 9, 1531, that Heaven met earth. On Tepeyac Hill, the Mother of God greeted him with tenderness: "Juanito, the littlest of my sons... where are you going?"

The Humility Heaven Could Entrust

When Mary asked him to carry her message to the bishop, Juan Diego didn't think he was worthy, and he said so with profound humility. He told her: "Please choose someone important for this task... I am only a porter's rope, a backframe, a man who is no one." He saw himself as small — not out of self-loathing, but out of *truth*. He knew he was not learned, powerful, or influential. He knew he was unknown in the eyes of the world.

And that is precisely why Our Lady chose him. Juan Diego's humility made him a clear vessel for God's grace. Our Lady wasn't looking for status,



she was looking for someone whose heart was ready. He didn't think he was worthy of the mission... which is what made him worthy.

Faithfulness Prepared Him for a Miracle. God did not choose a scholar, a nobleman, or a warrior. He chose a man who simply kept showing up — to prayer, to Mass, to love of neighbor. Juan Diego's daily faithfulness and honest humility opened the door for the greatest miracle of the New World. His long walks became the very path where Our Lady's message transformed a continent. It is a reminder for all of us: God entrusts great things to those who are faithful and humble in the small things. His humility and faith made him worthy of Our Lady's trust.